

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 22, 2006

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

As you prepare your Fiscal Year 2008 budget, we join together in a bipartisan spirit to urge you to continue to increase investments in the U.S. International Affairs Budget – essential to protecting our national security, building economic prosperity, and conveying our humanitarian values. Now more than ever, we must emphasize the critical role of development and diplomacy in contributing to global stability.

Support for the U.S. International Affairs Budget is shared across the political spectrum, from national security and foreign policy experts to the vast majority of the American public. In the 2006 National Security Strategy, your Administration reaffirmed that “Development reinforces diplomacy and defense, reducing long-term threats to our national security by helping to build stable, prosperous, and peaceful societies.” The Pentagon’s 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review cited the lack of U.S. civilian international capability as hindering the Pentagon’s core mission to defend the United States. Furthermore, the bipartisan 9/11 Commission called for an increased investment in the full range of diplomatic, development and humanitarian tools to deliver long-term success for U.S. foreign policy.

Moreover, support from the American people remains strong for investments in the International Affairs Budget. A recent nationwide survey by the Program for International Policy Attitudes revealed that 69% of Americans wanted to see a greater emphasis on “soft power” in America’s foreign policy.

The vast array of programs in the International Affairs toolkit ranges from combating proliferation of nuclear weapons to boosting sales of our nation’s goods and services around the world through export promotion and commercial diplomacy, to investing in maternal and child health. This budget expresses the compassion of the American people for those in need around the world through spurring economic development, strengthening democracies and civil societies, and responding to global challenges such as HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, hunger, illiteracy, and environmental degradation.

The International Affairs Budget energizes our outreach to the world through vigorous public diplomacy, people-to-people educational and cultural exchanges, Peace Corps volunteers, and capable, secure embassies and diplomats who provide the first line of offense for America’s interests abroad. Our emergency food aid program provides relief for those suffering from famine and disaster.

Together we must ensure that the U.S. is equipped to face its global challenges – and its opportunities – in the 21st century. Investing in the International Affairs Budget accomplishes this important goal and affirms the reality that what happens abroad ultimately affects our prosperity, our values, and our safety here at home. As you prepare the FY08 Federal Budget, we urge you to continue to increase funding for U.S. International Affairs programs.

Sincerely,

Howard S. Berman

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Rush Holt

Amy Sue

Todd R. Platts

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John Lee

Karen Emanuel

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T. J.

Zoe

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